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Hello, my name is Daniel Byrd and I am a senior political science major from Cheshire, Connecticut. I also have the great honor of being Student Body President at the University of Connecticut at Storrs. Thank you for allowing me, and all the students after me, to speak before you today. I would also like to thank you all for your past and continued support for UConn. It is so important to realize that an investment in UConn, in UConn students, is an investment in Connecticut.

I would like to ask everybody in this room who is here to support UConn to please stand. Everybody you see standing behind me is depending on you. Depending on you to reduce these cuts. To continue invest in them. To invest in their future. To invest in the future of this State by maintaining the state appropriations to UConn. These proposed cuts pose a threat to necessary programs and services that have allowed these students to flourish and succeed.

UConn is one of the best public Universities in the United States. We are recognized all over the world as an institution with extraordinary faculty, an intelligent student body, impressive scientific research that is changing the world, and a leader in so many academic fields. This is all thanks to the investment that the State of Connecticut has made in UConn. We would not be a top 20 public University without your support. UConn could not offer an affordable education without the generosity from the General Assembly. But, in recent years, we have seen the cost of attendance rise. In fact, in this fiscal year, fiscal year 17, tuition has actually surpassed state appropriations as the number one source of revenue for the University. This means the cost of operating UConn is falling more and more on the backs of students.

How can we expect to stay affordable and competitive and recruit amazing students from all over the state, the country, and the world if we are shifting more of the cost to students?

Please consider that when reviewing these proposed cuts.

You will hear from amazing UConn students over the next few hours. They will tell you why they chose UConn, how their financial aid allowed them to attend UConn, why their research is dependent on support from the General Assembly, and their plans to stay and innovate in the great State of Connecticut. Students also believe that it is important to highlight UConn's impact on industry. Business owners and industry leaders all over the State rely on UConn for intelligent, innovative, creative, and hard-working graduates to work at their companies. With that, I would like to thank you for your time and introduce David Olchowski the President and General Manager of GKN Aerospace Services Structures Corporation.